

FINAL



Town of Southern Shores

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Planning Board Meeting

(Special Meeting)

December 4, 2017

5:30 p.m., Pitts Center

MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Sam Williams called the Special Meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Planning Board Members Joe McGraw, Elizabeth Morey, David Neal, Jay Russell, Sam Williams, alternate member Carlos Gomez, ETJ Representative John Finelli, and Town Planner Wes Haskett were present.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairperson Sam Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Jay Russell motioned to approve the agenda. David Neal seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Discussion of Tree Removal on Private Property as Part of Module One of the Town Code Update Project

Chairperson Williams stated that tree removal on private property was the second topic of the critical issues raised in Module One of the Town Code Update project.

Chairperson Williams said that the issue of tree cutting on private property was a complex, divisive, and difficult issue that is hard to enforce. He indicated that two proposed ZTAs on this topic had come before the Planning Board in 2015 and that the Planning Board recommended non-approval of both to the Town Council. This was followed by a brief presentation by Chairperson Williams on many of the issues, both positive and negative, related to this topic. He also pointed out that currently 475 lots of the Town's 2,586 lots are vacant, which is about 18% of the total number of lots. At this time, there are no Town ordinances regulating tree removal on private property, either during construction or after construction.

The Board discussed each option proposed by CodeWright Planners for tree removal on private property in Module One as well as specific topics. Among the topics discussed were : heritage trees, tree removal on vacant lots, tree removal on developed lots,

showing trees of a certain size on proposed site plans, buffer areas, and stormwater retention.

Because of the Planning Board's interest in maintaining the existing condition of a canopy of trees over streets in many parts of Town, tree removal within the Town right-of-way was also discussed. It was recognized that the trees within the Town right-of-way belong to the Town. However, property owners are allowed to remove trees within the Town right-of-way, as allowed by the Town. The Town removes trees in the right-of-way during street rebuild projects in accordance with Town policy (this policy can be found under Public Works on the Town's website) and if trees are storm damaged, diseased, or dead. The Board agreed that the Town Council should keep the ability of property owners to remove trees in the right-of-way in front of their property and strongly reiterate its support for maximizing preservation of existing trees within the right-of-way during road rebuild projects.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

None.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

VIII. PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

David Neal stated that the Town's tree cutting in the Town right-of-way has improved since the Fairway Drive and Dogwood Trail intersection projects. The Town paid attention to the responses of property owners and responded positively.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Chairperson Williams stated that the next two meetings will be held on December 18, 2017 followed by and January 3, 2018.

X. ADJOURNMENT:

Joe McGraw motioned to adjourn. Jay Russell seconded the motion. The motioned passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

ATTEST:


Sam Williams, Chairperson

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:


Wes Haskett, Town Planner